

“Finally, a doctor who is really trying to help me get well. Thanks, Dr. Cruz, for helping me get off my prescription medications instead of putting me on even more.”

from
best-selling
author of
**Answering
the Call**



DIGEST THIS NOW!

Liz Cruz, M.D.
Tina Nunziato, C.H.N.C.



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Best Selling Author of “Answering the Call” &

Tina Nunziato, Certified Holistic Nutrition Consultant

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This book is dedicated to you – because without you, there would be no reason for it! We are so excited to finally deliver this amazing information into your hands. There were so many times Tina and I wanted to bury this information and move on but you: our patients, clients, friends and family kept encouraging us to push on. Thank you!

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Epilogue

I count it a blessing to have been given the privilege to go to medical school in the United States. I got my M.D. in 1993 and thought I had reached the pinnacle of my career. So much time and energy invested in getting to that point. Then there was internship, then residency and finally GI fellowship. Along the journey, there were many exciting side trips such as being stationed in Guam with the Navy where I got to practice as an Internist at the Naval Hospital. From there I went back to training to become a Gastroenterologist.

Again, I want to be clear that I am ever so grateful for the honor of becoming a physician, I am so grateful to all the teachers and mentors I have had along the way. I say this, because what I am about to say is in no way a slam to anyone who has taught or mentored me. In fact, I would not even be here if it were not for all these wonderful teachers/mentors I have had. But, the reality is that after ten years of medical training no one really taught us anything about the role nutrition plays in our digestive health.

For years now, I have seen thousands of patients who come in for a variety of different gastrointestinal (GI) issues. I perform colonoscopies, upper endoscopies, run labs, do ultrasounds, CAT scans, MRI's, sometimes repeating some of these tests, prescribe great drugs and still the patients come back with symptoms. Now, I realize there is always the issue of patient compliance (meaning are patients really

doing what I ask them to do), but let's assume for now that the patients have been fully compliant with my recommendations. Why then do they continue to come back with symptoms?

A few years ago, I really started thinking heavily about the role of nutrition. As I asked patients about what they ate and drank, many would almost get defensive saying they have a good diet and that is not the problem. A few would admit that they did not have the greatest diet. Even in those who claimed to have a great diet, as I questioned them more it became evident that a good diet wasn't necessarily a healthy diet.

Unfortunately, it has been very difficult to really engage in a good discussion about nutrition in the office, because of time constraints. Due to reimbursement cuts by health insurance companies, we have been forced to see more patients on any given day, in order to be able to survive as a business. It is hard enough to address the ongoing symptoms and make a treatment plan in the small amount of time in the office, now throw in trying to do nutritional counseling. It just does not happen.

The fact of the matter is the Standard American Diet (SAD) has poisoned our bodies. The food we eat makes our bodies sick. The food we eat makes our bodies fat. The food we have grown up eating here in North America does not nurture us. The food is so devitalized that it cannot nourish our cells. The body can only put up with this for so long before it starts to deteriorate. Why is it that there is so much cancer, heart disease, stroke, diabetes, fatty liver, obesity,

among other diseases in our country? How is it that these illnesses have increased over the past few decades, instead of decreasing with our ever advancing medical technology and pharmaceuticals?

I truly believe as we have become more medically advanced and now have the most amazing drugs available to treat almost anything, we feel we can eat or do anything we want and all we have to do is take a pill to solve all of our problems. In order to keep up with this fast paced life that we have created for ourselves, the food industry has created pre-packaged food to eat on the run, that if need be could sit on a shelf indefinitely with all the preservatives and chemicals it contains. We have a fast food restaurant on every corner to help make our lives easier. If that was not enough, just to give us that extra boost in the morning, we can pick up a sugar or artificial sugar loaded fancy coffee drink loaded with caffeine. We now eat for convenience instead of for purpose and as a result, our health, especially our digestive health, suffers.

I see young people in their 20's and 30's who have already been diagnosed with irritable bowel syndrome, fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue syndrome, and cancer. I do colonoscopies on young people in whom I find precancerous polyps. If they had waited until the age of 50 to have their first baseline screening colonoscopy, there is a good chance they would not have even made it to that age because those precancerous polyps would have turned into colon cancer. This is what has happened to our fast pace, rushed, technologically advanced society. We are so

advanced in so many areas and yet we neglect the things that are most important. It makes me sad.

I felt like I needed to find another answer. The drugs I was prescribing should have been helping my patients, but even they were not cutting it. I started doing my own research. I needed to do something! My patients needed a different answer, something that actually worked. I read a ton of books, spoke with many industry experts and finally landed on what I believe is the answer. And after trying it out on myself, my family and patient after patient it seems to be working.

The answer is not a fancy fad diet; there are no shots, no pills, no calorie counting, and no frills. If you want to feel better, eliminate your digestive issues, get your energy back and maybe even lose weight, I have a very simple answer for you. It is not a diet but a way of life that anyone can take on immediately. I hope that the contents of this book will inspire you to take action. I hope it will inspire you to think twice about what you put in your mouth. I hope I will be able to paint a picture of digestive wellness that will inspire you to change your life forever.

Our story

“Doc I’m just not digesting well,” this is something I hear day in and day out as a Gastroenterologist. I have been practicing Gastroenterology for over a decade now and it seems I am getting busier and busier with each passing year. From the time I started practicing medicine I have had a very strong desire to spend time with my patients – listening to them, examining them, and really trying to get to the root of their issues. Around 2007 when I started my own practice, I noticed my patient panel start to shift. I started seeing many more young people in their 20’s and 30’s with the same digestive issues I was used to seeing in 50 and 60 year olds (including having precancerous polyps). I was running tests and doing procedures on all ages only to find nothing medically wrong which made treating the patients symptoms difficult. I was telling more and more patients they were going to have to be on prescription or non-prescription drugs indefinitely. This does not sit well with most, especially the younger patients.

My staff will tell you that I am the type of doctor that truly cares about my patients’ well-being. When the answer is not there, Dr. Cruz will find it. But I have to admit, what was happening with the patients in my practice was stumping me time and time again. One day I approached my Office Manager, Tina Nunziato, who is also my life partner, and I asked her what we could do for these patients that were having digestive

symptoms with no known cause. Her response was, “I don’t know, but let’s find out.” That led us on a three year journey to discovering some pretty interesting facts about three key industries – food, healthcare and pharmaceuticals. After reading a ton of books, going to seminars, and talking with industry experts, I realized very quickly how little my medical degree actually taught me about nutrition and digestion.

Please know that I feel honored and privileged to have gone to medical school but knowing what I know now I feel sad that our medical schools are so focused on teaching us to find the symptoms and treat with drugs or surgery instead of really trying to get to the root cause. On average my patients are on 12 – 15 medications and we think this is how medicine should be. Unfortunately we are not healing patients like this; we are merely putting band-aids on very simple issues. In addition, by treating patients with this methodology, we are causing bigger issues and even more symptoms. Most of my patients cannot even remember what it feels like to be well. The question is, when will it end? When will patients realize enough is enough, and actually want to feel better again? Tina and I felt it was our mission to teach our patients what we learned so they could make more educated decisions for themselves when it comes to their health and their body.

Tina and I started incorporating our learning into our own life and the lives of our children. We felt if